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## Fidel as Supplicant

Fidel Castro, in his recent interview with a New York Times reporter, played the role of a sweetly reasonable leader anxious to negotiate some kind of mutually satisfactory deal with the United States. And now he has had his brother Raul—Armed Forces Minister of Communist Cuba—speak out even more emphatically in favor of such negotiation.

Raul has put it this way: Havana's Red regime is ready to meet with our country's representatives "anywhere, anytime" to discuss whatever may be necessary to improve relations with Washington. To that end, or so Raul has declared, Fidel is willing to forget about his prior demand that our country accept certain conditions as a prelude to peace-making talks. These conditions would require, among other things, an end to U-2 surveillance flights and abandonment of our Guantanamo Naval Base.

Clearly, the Kremlin's man in Havana has become a supplicant of sorts. For the time being at least, he has

an implacable foe of "Yankee imperialism." No longer (on the surface, that is) does he promote subversion and aggression in the Americas. Now he is respectable; now he wants to arrive at a live-and-let-live understanding with the United States.

Of course, a certain amount of skepticism is in order when one tries to evaluate Fidel's maneuvers. What he and Raul have said seems to have been timed to influence the deliberations of the current meeting of the Organization of American States, most of whose members have indicated a firm intention to vote for diplomatic, economic and other sanctions against the Castro tyranny. In that context, it is easy to understand what Fidel may be up to.

Nevertheless there also is reason to believe that our country's political and economic pressures on Cuba are hurting very much and that Dictator Castro, despite all the help he receives from Moscow, is feeling the pinch. There should be no rush to relieve him of the